SUBSTITUTE SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

PORTABLE LOCKER BACKPACK

CLAIM OF PRIORITY

[0001] This application makes reference to, incorporates the same herein, and claims all benefits accruing under 35 U.S.C. §119 from a provisional application entitled *Sports Equipment Bag-Organizer and Ventilator* earlier filed under 35 U.S.C. §111(b) in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on 14 December 2000 and there duly assigned Serial No. 60/255,060, and a disclosure document entitled *Sports Equipment Organizer with Locking Device* on 22 March 2001 and there duly assigned Disclosure Document No. 490860.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to a sports equipment backpack, and more particularly, to a portable locker backpack (backpack) for organizing sports equipment and related articles while providing ventilation for the sports equipment and the related articles.

Description of the Background Art

[0003] In athletic activities such as hockey, baseball, football, or inline skating, a person may have to carry uniforms, a face mask, helmets, knee pads, and other assorted sports equipment. The assorted equipment has usually been just placed in a backpack where it has been difficult to take out the sometimes heavy and cumbersome equipment and also to perform a visual inventory of the backpack. Another problem with the earlier sports equipment backpacks was that the equipment and clothing articles related to the sports accumulated perspiration. The backpack would cause an increased odor because of the lack of proper ventilation. The damp garment, sports, and athletic equipment, boots and shoes were dried out on purchased racks or spread around on the floor or on furniture. Garments and sports equipment that retain water will mold, mildew, and develop unpleasant odors without adequate air circulation. Equipment in a backpack should be dried out, so there is an aggravation of removing equipment from the backpack to dry the equipment because if the equipment is left in the backpack, there can be damage to equipment if the equipment cannot fully dry. It is a cumbersome process of taking the equipment out of the backpack. Unloading the conventional sports backpack and placing the items around an area to allow for air-drying is time consuming, visually unpleasant, and consumes space. This procedure also increases the chance of misplacing an item and leaving it behind. Conventionally vented backpacks offer limited benefit due to the density of equipment obstructing air penetration inside the backpack.

[0004] A travel and sports organizer backpack, equipped with a method of air circulation is needed to effectively air dry articles without complex and expensive structures as well as being an organization and space saving tool that allows for quick and easy use.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] It is therefore an object to have a backpack that can effectively air dry articles without complex and expensive structures as well as being an organization and space saving tool.

[0006] It is another object to have a backpack that can have the contents viewed quickly for use.

[0007] It is still yet another object to have a backpack that can ventilate while being in a closed position.

[0008] It is yet another object to have a backpack that can ventilate while being in an open or folded position.

[0009] It is another object to have a backpack that can be easily hung up to allow a flat view of the contents.

[0010] It is yet another object to save time by being able to hang up all contents of a backpack at the same time.

[0011] It is still another object to have a backpack that can organize objects in a backpack in a systematic manner.

[0012] It is another object to have objects organized in a single plane.

[0013] To accomplish the above and other objectives, the present invention provides a backpack including a back wall having a hook accommodating the hanging of the backpack when opened, a plurality of compartments on a front surface of the back wall, the plurality of compartments having a front portion being of a mesh or netted material accommodating a view of the objects and a circulation of air within the compartments. The compartments can have shelves projecting from the back wall to accommodate the objects. The wall can be folded or rolled to close the back wall

into the backpack for carrying by by shoulder straps on a back of a user.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] A more complete appreciation of this invention, and many of the attendant advantages thereof, will be readily apparent as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which like reference symbols indicate the same or similar components, wherein:

[0015] Fig. 3 is a view of a backpack having back strap attached to the folded backpack;

[0016] Fig. 7 is a perspective view of a backpack having the object holder in a closed position;

[0017] Fig. 8 is another embodiment of a backpack in an open position;

[0018] Fig. 10 is a backpack in a closed position;

[0019] Fig. 13 is another embodiment of the opening of the backpack of Fig. 5;

[0020] Fig. 14 is a view of a loop in the backpack of Fig. 5;

[0021] Fig. 15 is a plan view of the backpack of Fig. 8 having wheels;

[0022] Fig. 17 is view of the backpack of Fig. 10 having a mesh sidewall;

[0023] Fig. 19 is a view of a backpack accommodating longer items.

[0024] Fig. 20 is a view of a backpack accommodating backstraps.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0025] In another embodiment of the present invention, as seen in Fig. 3, the object holder 10 can be folded to form backpack 210 allowing a user to have one or both handles 220 supported by the shoulders of a user. For example, the top portion 160 can be folded to meet with the bottom

portion 170 of the object holder 10 to connect the two sides using the adjustment strap 146. The backpack 210 can be connected between the two portions of the object holder 10. The pair of handles 220 can for example be placed on one side of the object holder on opposite ends of the back side 140 of the object holder. The position of the backpack straps are such that a user can carry the backpack 210 on both shoulders at the same time if needed. The top portion 220a of the handle 220 is coupled on the top portion of the backpack 210 and the bottom portion 220b of the handle 220 is positioned below the top portion 220a of the handle 220. Other configurations of the handles 220 can be made as long as a user may carry the backpack 210 on both shoulders at the same time.

[0026] The backpack 610 has an object holder such as the object holder 420 or the object holder 10. The object holder 620 has a pair of shoulder straps along the length of one side on the back wall 640 of the object holder 620. The shoulder straps 688 allow a user to carry the backpack 610 around both shoulders on their back like a backpack. A zipper 680 or other connector type closes the backpack 610. Additional pockets 630 may be added to the outside of the backpack 610 to allow additional storage and quicker access when the backpack 610 is closed.

[0027] A backpack 710, as seen in Fig. 8 has a hook 712 that is shaped to hang on top of a door. The hook 712 is attached to a strap 713 that allows the backpack to rest on the floor, thereby reducing the weight on the hanging structure. A clasp 714 are attached on the pockets 770 to help secure items inside. The clasp 714 can be substituted with velcro or other similar means. Elastic is sewn into the strap 716 to keep the strap 716 at the top of each compartment straight and assist in securing the items in the compartments. Smaller items are stored in the middle compartments

718 and are structured to allow the top to fold down smoothly. Side handles 720 are sewn into the side walls 724 to accommodate additional carrying options. A mesh wall 722 is used to hold any smaller items in the bottom and the wall 722 assists in holding the sides together.

[0028] As seen in Fig. 10, the backpack 710 is in a closed position. The backpack 710 has a top mesh pocket 732 and a bottom mesh pocket 730. Each of the pockets has only a portion that is made of mesh material and the remaining portion of the pockets being of solid material that is not see-through. Solid material that is not see-through is a material that one cannot see through with an unaided eye. The mesh materials 730 and 732 accommodate a ventilation of the pockets. The bottom pocket with the mesh material 730 can have door zippers 740. I-rings are attached to the front portion of the closed backpack to allow for attachments such as bungee cord to attach additional items such as camping equipment or snowboards. An adjustable strap 734 is transversely disposed near the middle section of the front portion of the closed backpack 710. The adjustable strap 734 can secure bulky items such as butt-pads for ice hockey. The butt-pads for instance can hook to the outside with the adjustable clasp 736. The adjustable strap 734 allows for the size of the backpack 710 too be not excessively large since the adjustable strap can take care of extremely bulky equipment. Since, the backpack 710 can be carried on the back of a user, an excessively large backpack may not be desirable. A handle 728 is attached to the top portion of the backpack 720 allowing further flexibility for a user to carry the backpack 710. The backpack 710 can be closed from an open position as seen in Fig. 8 to the closed position as seen in Fig. 10 with a zipper 738 or other fastening means. The side walls 724 can be of a solid material that may or may not accommodate ventilation or the side walls can be of a mesh material

725 as seen in Fig. 17 that accommodates a ventilation of the inside of the backpack 710 though the side walls. The mesh material 725 being on the side walls (on both sides of the backpack) is important because all the inner compartments 770 can be ventilated properly. If both side walls are made of a material that allows ventilation like the mesh material 725, then a cross vent is created to increase the ventilation of the inner compartments (pockets) 770. Furthermore, because the material mesh 725 material is on the side walls, it is not so prone to being worn out as if it was on the front or back side of the backpack. The side walls 724 extend from each side of the bottom portion 782 of the back wall 780 of the backpack 710 where the bottom portion 782 of the back wall 780 of the backpack 710 has a greater width than the top portion 784 of the back wall 780 of the backpack 710. The side walls 724 form angles with the extended portion 786 of the bottom back wall 782 of the backpack 710 accommodating a backpack that closes all sides which then stop any loose items that get out of the compartments 770 from being released from the backpack 710.

[0029] Looking at Fig. 11, the backpack 710 (and also on backpack 810) can have also a strap 752 secured to the top of the backpack 710 that allows for clothes hangers to hang for jerseys or street clothes. A 1 inch webbing 756 under 1 ½ inch webbing is added before stitching. A 1 inch webbing is placed under top clasp before stitching. There must be enough slack allowed for attachment of hangers holding jersey or other clothes. The total webbing length being added appears to be about 6 inches. The 6 inches allows for one inch to be under the top webbing for securement and one inch to be under other clasp strap 758 with four inches exposed allowing for enough slack to hang hangers for jerseys and clothes. A clasp 754 is attached to the clasp strap 752

for hanging the jerseys or street clothes.

[0030] Wheels can also be added to any of the above embodiments allowing a user to cart the backpack. The backpacks 210, 610, and 710 may especially have wheels on a bottom portion allowing for a user to cart the backpacks 210, 610, and 710. Referring to Fig. 15, the backpack 910 is the same as backpack 710 except that backpack 910 includes a pair of wheels 920 that allows for the backpack 910 to be transported on the ground by rolling the backpack along the ground or other surface by pulling from the handle 940.

[0031] Referring to Fig. 19, straps 790 can be used to secure longer items 792 to sides of the backpack 710. The straps 790 may include fasteners such as velcro, clasps and other means of attachment. The straps 790 can be elastic allowing a user to slide items in the openings. Mesh pockets can also be used for holding the longer items 792 in place.

[0032] As seen above, the present invention provides for a backpack and organizer that is equipped with a method of air circulation to effectively air dry articles without complex and expensive structures as well as being an organization and space saving tool. The backpack provides for a quick inventory and access of the objects organized within the backpack.

[0033] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that the foregoing and other changes in form and details may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.